

Testimony of Alan Addley  
Superintendent of the Granby Public Schools  
In SUPPORT of SB 378  
In OPPOSITION to SB 380  
Submitted to the Education Committee  
March 7, 2016

Good afternoon Senator Slossberg, Representative Fleischmann and members of the Education Committee. My name is Alan Addley and I am the Superintendent of the Granby Public Schools. I also serve as the Vice President of the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents. I wish to address two bills.

First, I am in support of Senate Bill 378, an act that supports the establishment of the High School Graduation Requirements Council and requires the Connecticut State Board of Education (CSDE) to develop new recommendations for high school graduation. High school graduation requirements have been amended at least thirteen times since 2010, when the significant changes in the high school graduation requirements were first adopted. Other than kicking the can down the road, there has been limited support for these requirements from districts and the CSDE. We know that doing more of the same (25 credits versus 21) will not result in the change we desire for Connecticut students; rather, Connecticut students deserve graduation requirements that reflect contemporary, rigorous and innovative thinking. In calling for a comprehensive review of the graduation requirements, you enable Connecticut's local school districts from wasting more time and money in preparing for the requirements. I encourage your support for Senate Bill 378.

Secondly, I am in opposition to Senate Bill 380, an act that would exclude student performance data on the Smarter Balanced Assessment from teacher performance evaluations. I believe this step to be premature and unnecessary. The Connecticut's Performance Evaluation Advisory Committee (PEAC) represents key stakeholders and is responsible for revising and implementing the evaluation system. Any proposed changes should come from PEAC. Also, the results of a PEAC random sampling survey of thirty districts, totaling approximately 1,300 teachers and 141 administrators which was released today, showed that most teachers and administrators supported the use of student achievement in evaluation plans.

Clearly, the current teacher evaluation process still needs some revision; however, student growth and achievement data need to be part of a modern, accountable and effective teacher evaluation

system that includes multiple measures of student achievement and simultaneously helps build the instructional capacity of our teachers.

I am concerned that actions such as the removal of student performance from the evaluation process and the recent decision to delete the performance component of the Language Arts Smarter Balanced Assessments signal a slippery slope and, at best, send mixed messages to our communities.

Connecticut has made good progress in recent years. If the state is serious about improving the educational performance of its students and eliminating achievement gaps, then it should stay the course with student performance being part of the evaluation of its evaluation system. I encourage you to reject SB 380.

Thank you for your consideration and for your work on behalf of the children of our state.